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Party Realignment in Italy:
The 1994 Parliamentary Elections**

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Plurality Competition and Party Realignment in Italy: The 1994 Parliamentary Elections

by Stefano Bartolini and Roberto D'Alimonte

On August 4, 1993 the Italian Parliament has approved the new electoral law for the Chamber and the Senate. The new law marks a radical departure from the previous system of proportional representation which had been one of the main features of the Italian political system in the post-war period. According to the new system 3/4 of the seats in both branches of Parliament are allocated in single-member districts with the plurality formula. The remaining seats are assigned on a proportional basis. On March 26/27, 1994 the first elections with the new rules were held, following the early dissolution of Parliament. This paper is about these elections. Its main goal is to analyse in detail what has happened in the single-member districts. The focus is on the plurality component of the electoral system, the new patterns of competition, and the performance of the different electoral cartels. This analysis will be preceded, however, by a short account of the main features of the new electoral system, a description of the new political forces and alliances, and a general overview of the results at the national level.

The new electoral system

The new electoral rules were the outcome of a long political process marked by a referendum, the impact of corruption scandals and a complex set of political compromises (Pappalardo 1995). The new system is based on a complex mix of plurality and proportionality (D'Alimonte and Chiaramonte 1995). Moreover, there are significant differences between the Chamber and the Senate which, as we shall see later, are partially responsible for the different electoral results in these two branches. For the election of the 630 members of the Chamber of Deputies, Italy has been divided into 26 multi-member constituencies, plus the small region of the Valle d'Aosta which has only one seat. In turn, each of these constituencies was divided into a number of single-member districts approximately equal to 75% of the seats assigned to them. The remaining 25% of the seats are allocated at the constituency level. Therefore in each constituency we find both n single-member districts and one multi-member district with m number of seats. The existence of these two different levels - the constituency and the district - is the direct result of the mixed nature of the system. In fact, in the single-member districts the electoral formula is plurality, whereas at the constituency level is a form of PR. In the Chamber 475 seats are assigned with the former method and 155 with the latter. The same basic structure applies to the Senate. Here the plurality seats are 232 and the PR seats are 83 with 20 regional constituencies (but two of them - Valle d'Aosta and Molise - have no PR seats). Table 1 shows,

for both branches, the PR constituencies and , for each constituency, the number of single-member (plurality) districts.

(Table 1 about here)

The similarity between the electoral rules of the Chamber and the Senate stops here. Indeed, the two systems are significantly different. The first difference has to do with ballot structure. In the Chamber, each voter has two ballots and can express two votes. One vote is for the selection of the candidates in the single-member district; the second vote goes to party lists for the PR seat allocation at the constituency level. This means, among other things, that voters may split their votes between the two levels, voting for a candidate of one party (or coalition) in the district and for the list of a different party at the PR level. In the Senate, instead, the ballot and the vote are one and the same. In other words, the same ballot will affect the allocation of both plurality and PR seats. Indeed, the candidates for both types of seats are the same. The PR seats are allocated to the "best losers" in the single-member districts. Not so in the Chamber, where parties are allowed to run ,at the PR level, a list of candidates which may or may not include candidates running also in the plurality arena.

The second difference has to do with the allocation of PR seats. In the case of the Chamber , the allocation is a two -

step process. First, it occurs at the national level with the largest remainders method using the natural quota. However, only parties which get at least 4% of the valid votes nation-wide can get any PR seats. In the March elections 7 parties were able to overcome the threshold. The second stage involves the distribution of the seats allocated to each party to its lists in the different constituencies, on the basis of a 'constituency electoral quota'. For the Senate, the PR seats are assigned directly at the constituency level using the d'Hondt formula. There is no legal threshold such as the one for the Chamber. There is however a *de facto* threshold which is generally high since it is influenced by the use of the d'Hondt method and the relatively small size of the constituencies (with the exception of Lombardia). This means that it is usually difficult for small parties to get PR seats, unless they are regionally concentrated (Chiaramonte 1995).

The third, and most important difference, between the Chamber and the Senate is related to the *scorporo*. This is a peculiar feature of the Italian system. For both branches, parties are not allowed to use, towards the allocation of PR seats, all of the votes they actually get. They have to pay a "price" if they win seats in the single-member districts. The *scorporo* is such a price. The *scorporo* is calculated differently in the two branches. In the case of the Chamber, for each plurality seat won, the party will see its PR total votes at the

constituency level diminished by the number of votes (plus one) received by the *second-placed* candidate in the single member district where it has won the seat. Only the votes *after the scorporo* will be used to determine how many PR seats the party will eventually get. In the case of the Senate, the *scorporo* applies to *all* of the votes received by the winning candidate in each single member district. In other words, the usable PR votes of each party, in each constituency, are equal to the number of votes received by its losing candidates. Obviously, this makes the cost of the *scorporo* higher for the Senate than for the Chamber. In both branches the rationale for this mechanism is the same: the limitation of the disproportional effects of the plurality system for the purpose of giving minor parties the chance to get a few more PR seats than they would be able to gain without the *scorporo*.

Given the scope of this paper, we don't need to expand further the analysis of the new electoral rules. What matters is to stress that the plurality component of the system has been very influential. The new rules have provided a strong institutional incentive towards electoral and party realignment. Before taking a closer look at the specific impact of the plurality system, we review briefly the actors of the changing party system in order to clarify the nature and the scope of the realignment.

New political forces and electoral alliances

In the last few years the configuration of the party system has changed radically. Old parties have either transformed themselves or disappeared; new parties have entered the political arena. These changes have preceded the approval of the new electoral law. However, the new law itself, given its predominantly majoritarian component, has been a powerful factor of change. So, we can say that the evolution of the party system is the result of the interplay of the process of party de-alignment with the structure of opportunities and risks offered by the new electoral system. The process of party de-alignment dates back to the 80's. This is the time when new, and durable, political forces appeared on the scene - the Greens and the regional Leagues. The pace of change however accelerated dramatically with the emergence of two factors: the disintegration of communism and the judicial investigations which have exposed the network of corruption linking together some of the traditional political parties, businessmen and public administrators. We will refer to the latter factor as "tangentopoli" (bribe town).

These two factors have had a different impact on different actors. The first has affected directly and dramatically the major party of the left, the Italian Communist Party (PCI). Between November 1989 and February 1991 the PCI completed its transformation into the Party of the Democratic Left (PDS) (Ignazi 1992). In the process, a neo-communist party was formed: Rifondazione Comunista (RC). The effects of the disintegration of communism have been much deeper and wider

and extend beyond the confines of the left. Anti-communism was one of the major - if not the major - factor of stabilisation of the Italian party system of the post-war period. Its systemic relevance helps explain to a great extent the position of dominance of Christian Democracy (DC) in that system . No wonder, then, if its melting away would cause a serious blow to that party.

In the case of the DC however the influence of the "communist factor" has been reinforced by the impact of *tangentopoli*. In fact, the judicial investigations have revealed the extensive corruption of the two major governmental parties: the DC and the Italian Socialist Party (PSI). The combined effect of these two factors has been the virtual dismemberment of the PSI and the steep electoral and political decline of the DC. The results of every local election between 1992 (the first year of *tangentopoli*) and 1994 provide clear evidence of this phenomenon (Di Virgilio 1994). A similar pattern of judicial involvement and electoral decline has affected also the other minor centrist parties (PRI, PSDI and PLI) which - off and on - had shared government responsibilities with the DC and PSI in the previous years. In sum, the old centrist coalition that governed Italy until 1992 was irreversibly weakened leaving a political vacuum in this area of the space of competition.

During 1993 the beneficiaries of the collapse of the centre and the increasing volatility of the electorate were the Lega

Nord (LN) of Mr. Bossi and the Movimento Sociale Italiano-
 Destra Nazionale (MSI-DN) of Mr. Fini. The first party is the
 heir of the regional leagues which were formed in Northern
 Italy during the 80's. Its strength is concentrated only in
 this part of the country. Its platform is fundamentally
 moderate with a regionalist/federalist orientation (Diamanti
 1993). The MSI-DN has been the only party of the extreme
 right. Unlike the LN, it was a party with a national presence,
 though it got most of its support in the South. Its platform
 was inspired to a neo-fascist /nationalist ideology (Ignazi
 1989). In January 1994, it changed its name to MSI-Alleanza
 Nazionale¹. These two parties had only two things in common:
 both had never been in power; both had appeared and had been
 treated as "anti-system parties" before 1992. Therefore, both
 were able to capitalise after 1992 on their distance from the
 'old' and 'corrupt' regime. The change of the electoral system
 - summer 1993 - accelerated further the process of de-alignment
 and recomposition. Its predominant plurality component forced
 parties and individual politicians to choose allies in order
 to be competitive in the single-member districts. At the same
 time, the existence of a quota of PR seats added to the
 complexity of party calculations about optimal political
 strategies.

In Table 2 we give a synthetic account of the transformation of
 traditional and new parties. For each party listed in the first
 column we indicate the new parties/groups that have originated
 from it (in bold types) or the parties/groups that some of its

former members have joined. In this latter case we give the name of the leaders the have promoted the split/exit. The DC and the PSI are the two parties that have changed most. The Partito Popolare Italiano (PPI) is the direct successor of the DC. Of the 5 other groups that exited from it, the Rete is a left wing formation created by Mr. Orlando along with former members of the PCI (Novelli). The Centro Cristiano Democratico is a moderate group that moved toward the right. The Popolari per la Riforma is the group created by Mr. Segni, the DC leader who became the champion of the movement for changing the old PR system by way of national referendums. Later on, this group turned into the Patto Segni, a coalition of catholic and lay associations/individuals. Other former DC members (Fiori, Selva) joined Alleanza Nazionale, a conservative group that associated with the MSI to form MSI-AN. The PSI shows a similar pattern of splintering. Before the creation of the new Partito Socialista (PS) (Del Turco), the party had already lost many of its members to Rinascita Socialista (RS) and Alleanza Democratica (AD) (both leftist groups) and to the Patto Segni (centrist).

(Table 2 about here)

The key factor in the recomposition of this fragmented picture is Mr. Berlusconi, the businessman and media-tycoon, who created in February 1994 a new and moderate political party - Forza Italia (FI) - and positioned it in the centre-right area of the political spectrum. Berlusconi became quickly the

main actor in the process of structuring the new pattern of political competition. After weeks of hectic negotiations, following the early dissolution of Parliament and the opening of the electoral campaign, four electoral coalitions (or cartels) emerged as the competing actors. The immediate goal of these coalitions was to agree on the presentation of common candidates in the single-member districts. The agreement did not apply to the PR seats for the Chamber. Here each coalition partner was free to present its own list. All the major parties and many of the smaller ones took advantage of this opportunity (see Appendix A). From left to right, these coalitions were the Progressisti (PROG), Patto per l'Italia (PI), Polo delle Liberta' (PL), Polo del Buon Governo (PBG) (see Table 3).

(Table 3 about here)

The Progressisti is the cartel of the left including 8 parties/movements. Within it we find established parties such as the RC, PDS, PS, the Verdi and new formations such as the Rete, RS, AD and CS. The Patto per l'Italia is a *rassemblement* of the centre bringing together the Partito Popolare Italiano (PPI) and the Patto Segni. The PL and PBG are Berlusconi's creations. His goal was the formation of a unified and strong moderate coalition against the left. In the pursuit of this goal he was constrained by two factors: the refusal of the PPI to join forces with LN and MSI-AN under his leadership; the

refusal of LN to be in the same coalition with the MSI-AN. The first factor could not be removed. The second problem was dealt with successfully by Berlusconi through the expedient, accepted by his partners, of forming two different coalitions. In the North and Centre the Polo delle Libertà was the alliance of FI and LN (plus others, but not the MSI-AN). Here the MSI-AN ran competing candidates in the same districts. In the Southern districts, where the LN was anyway absent, the Berlusconi's coalition was made up by FI and MSI-AN (plus others). Therefore, FI was the common actor of the two centre-right coalitions. For what concerns PR seats FI, LN and MSI-AN have each run separate lists.

In terms of party system change, a further point to emphasise is the relevant systemic implication of Berlusconi's decision to incorporate MSI-AN in the mainstream of Italian politics. The end result is the re-legitimation of this party which was previously considered as an anti-system party without any coalition potential. The shift from PR to plurality and the steep electoral decline of the DC to the benefit of the MSI-AN in Southern Italy have provided powerful incentives for this strategy. Nevertheless, Berlusconi is the architect, though he found a very willing and capable ally in Fini, the young leader of the MSI-AN.

This is the structure of competition voters and parties faced in March 1994. The electoral coalitions were four, but, given the territorial differentiation of the two Berlusconi cartels,

the basic competitive pattern in the plurality arena was tripolar. In most districts in fact the candidates with any chance of success were three: a Progressisti candidate, a candidate from the Patto and either a candidate from the PL (in the North and Centre) or a candidate from PBG (in the South). As we shall see later however this basic pattern gave way to a number of variations.

The Results

The plurality component of the electoral system has been a powerful factor in shaping the outcome of the elections. Berlusconi and his allies have emerged as the clear winners. However, they did not win equally in the two branches of Parliament. The electoral system has produced a divided Parliament, with a clear centre-right majority in the House but leaving Berlusconi and his allies just short of a majority in the Senate. This has been one of the most surprising results of the elections.

(Table 4 about here)

Actually, without the proportional component, the plurality system would have yielded clear majorities both in the Chamber and in the Senate (Table 4). Yet, the outcome has been decided in the plurality arena. These elections have been majoritarian elections. The very difference between the Chamber and the Senate seats distribution originates in part from the

proportional component of the electoral system, but much more in the different outcome of the plurality competition in the two branches. The Progressisti have been more competitive in the Senate. This is the reason of the divided Parliament .

(Table 5 about here)

Let's proceed step by step looking first at the PR results for the Chamber in 1994 (list votes) comparing them with the 1987 and 1992 figures (Table 5). The data lend themselves to four basic observations:

- 1) FI turned out to be the largest party in spite of the fact that it did not exist just two months before the elections;
- 2) the PPI and the Patto Segni have lost almost 20% of the electorate compared to 1987 and have picked up about half of the Dc vote in 1992;
- 3) the MSI-AN almost tripled its vote compared to 1987-1992;
- 4) the left represented by the PDS and RC stands more or less where the PCI was in 1987 before its transformation; for these two parties, and particularly for the PDS, the 1994 elections marked an electoral come back compared to 1992.

In sum, the PR results reveal a clear tripolar electoral alignment markedly skewed towards the right. In fact, the combined strength of Lista Pannella, Lega Nord, Fi and MSI-AN (they all belong to the two Berlusconi's coalitions) amounts to 46.4% of the valid votes. The left (including PDS, RC, Rete, Verdi, AS and PS) stands at 34.4%. The centre (PPI and Patto Segni) received only 15.8% of the votes.

The plurality results show a radically different pattern: from tripolar into an outright bipolar one, with the Patto per l'Italia receiving only 0.8 % of the seats in the Chamber and 1.2% in the Senate. The following points emerge looking at Table 4:

1. Both in the Chamber and in the Senate the Poli (PL, PBG and their variants) have received the absolute majority of the single-member seats: 63.6% in the Chamber and 55.2 in the Senate. But the PR component of the system has compensated this outcome in such a way that in the Senate the absolute majority of the single-member seats has become a minority (though by a little) of the total seats ².
2. The Patto per l'Italia has been absolutely non-competitive in the plurality arena both in the Chamber (4 seats) and in the Senate (3), and it owes its parliamentary survival to the PR component, that was more marked in the Senate compared to the Chamber because of the different impact of the *scorporo*.
3. The Progressisti have done poorly in both branches. However their performance in the Senate has been considerably better than in the Chamber. In the plurality arena they have managed to get 41.4% of the seats *vis-a'-vis* the 34.5% of the Chamber. For the Progressisti, the PR component had a neutral effect since the percentage of PR seats in both branches is basically the same and roughly approaches the percentage of votes of the party lists belonging to the coalition ³.

At the level of the electoral coalitions, the plurality system yielded a basically bipolar outcome. Obviously this does not mean that this 'cartel bi-polarism' correspond to a two-party format. On the contrary, party fragmentation is high, and this is not only due to the existence of the PR arena, but also to the electoral strategy followed by all parties. This strategy was aimed at the formation of electoral cartels based on the proportional allotment of candidacies among the allies (D'Alimonte 94, Di Virgilio 95). Therefore, the expected effects of the plurality system upon party system fragmentation have developed at the level of each single-member district, but not at the national level. Excluding minor lists, we find in both branches more than 10 parties/movements (see Table A and B in the Appendix).

The competition in the single-member districts has been greatly affected by the persistent skewed territorial distribution of the electoral support for the main ideological families. The territorial concentration of the vote for the left in Central Italy, for the Lega in Northern Italy and for the MSI-AN in Southern Italy has reinforced the disproportional effects of the plurality system. This explains the astonishing success of the PL in the North and particularly in the Northeast and that of the Progressisti in the Central regions of the historical 'red-belt'. Excluding the Emilia-Romagna, the Progressisti got only 14 plurality seats out of 180 in the North, of which only 2 East of the Ticino river. Conversely, Lega Nord, Forza Italia and MSI-AN have received only 3 out of 80 seats in the

'red-belt'. In the Senate the picture is basically the same; if anything the right coalition has done even worst in the Central regions (just one Senator!). In conclusion, the country is divided into three areas, two of which are entirely non competitive (North and Centre) and one which is highly competitive (the South) ⁴. This profound territorialisation - enhanced by the majority system - has overshadowed any potential impact of a candidate oriented vote in spite of the personalisation induced by the use of single-member districts. In other words, the personality of the candidates has played no or little role in this first round of majoritarian elections. This explains at least partially the absence of variance at the district level in two out of the three areas of the country. One should expect that in the long run, were the logic of the plurality system to prevail, the variance among these areas will diminish and the variance within each area will increase.

The results of these elections will be approached in this essay by looking at four dimensions of analysis of plurality competition: 1) the closeness of district contests; 2) the role of fragmentation both on the supply and demand side; 3) the different patterns of competition ; and 4) the cohesion of the cartels. These four dimensions are not independent one from the other, but they interact with each other (particularly the first three) and moreover they are all affected by the fore mentioned uneven territorial distribution of electoral support for the major parties. For these reasons we will deal with each dimension individually, while highlighting their mutual

relationships and the role of territorial and branch differences within each of them. In sum, we will investigate how the given electoral preferences combined with the features of the electoral system to determine the outcome of a divided Parliament ⁵.

The Closeness of District Competition

In a plurality contest competitive candidates are those who win and those who, though loosing, come close to the winner. The distance between the first two candidates is therefore the key indicator of the level of competitiveness. However, it makes a difference which is the winning threshold, that is the minimum percentage of votes necessary to get a seat in each district. For this reason, before discussing competitiveness, we will analyse in detail the distribution of winning thresholds.

(Table 6 about here)

In Table 6 the mean winning thresholds are reported by branch and area. The differences between the Chamber and the Senate and between the geographic areas come out very clearly. In all the areas victories are obtained in the Chamber with a percentage of votes higher than in the Senate. At the national level, the difference is 7%. On average, the deputies of the North and the Centre have obtained their seats with about 50% of the votes. In a two-party system this would be a normal outcome, but in a system which is still highly fragmented,

this figure is surprisingly high. The more so if one considers that in the North the senators get their seats with an average vote of 39 %. This makes for a difference of about 11 % between the two branches. As far as the regional differences are concerned, the winning thresholds for the Chamber diminish constantly from the North to the South. This is not the case for the Senate: the winning threshold in the Centre is by far higher than in other areas.

(Table 7 about here)

Further information on the winning thresholds by area can be found in Table 7 where the winners are regrouped by class of plurality. The frequencies in this Table show that in the Chamber, in about one third of the districts (32.5%) winners have obtained the absolute majority of votes. Of these more than half are in the North (90/154). Here we even find 20 candidates who got more than 60 % of the votes. On the contrary, in the Senate the absolute majority is achieved only in 6.9% of the districts. Of these, 12 are in the Centre and only 3 in the North. If we consider the last class , we can see that in the Chamber only 12.4 % of the seats (59/475) have been gained with less than 35% of the votes. Of these, the overwhelming majority is in the South (52/59) and only four in the North. In the Senate, the percentage of seats with low winning threshold is considerably higher (31.9%) and it is also higher the percentage of those located in the North (19/74). The picture is clear: the level of competitiveness measured in

terms of the percentage of seats which are won with a low threshold (less than 35 %) is markedly higher in the Senate than in the Chamber and markedly higher in the South than in the North and the Centre.

(Table 8 about here)

To complete this section on winning thresholds, we need to look at the same phenomenon from the point of view of the coalition affiliation of the winning candidates. In Table 8 the mean percentage of votes of district winners by electoral cartel is reported. From it we can draw the following observations:

1. The systematic difference between the Chamber and the Senate is confirmed for all cartels (the only exception concerns the candidates of the Patto per l'Italia).
2. The Progressisti win their seats in the Chamber with an average vote lower than the general average, whereas in the Senate the contrary is true.
3. The Polo delle Libertà and the Polo del Buon Governo have a much higher vote in the Chamber than in the Senate. For the Polo delle Libertà the difference is higher than 10%; for the Polo del Buon Governo is about 8%.
4. The candidates of the Patto and those of Forza Italia and MSI-Alleanza Nazionale when not allied win their seats with low percentages of votes.

In conclusion, let's fix three important points: 1) the majority of seats won with low vote percentages (less than 35%) is in the Senate districts; 2) the majority of these of

seats in the Chamber is won by the Progressisti; 3) in the Senate the Progressisti and the two Poli split them evenly ⁶.

(Table 9 about here)

After this discussion of the winning threshold, we now move to the main indicator of competitiveness: the difference in vote percentages between the first and the second placed candidate. In Table 9 we have classified all plurality contests on the basis of this indicator. In the first class, that of **marginal districts**, fall all those races where the distance between the winner and the runner up is lower or equal to 8% of the valid votes. It goes without saying that the choice of such figure is to a large extent arbitrary, although in our case the choice of a slightly different threshold (say 6 or 10%) does not modify the substance of the comment. What is more important, however, is that the empirical definition of electoral marginality is dependent on the general volatility level of each election. A difference of votes below 8% represents a safe margin in cases and periods of low volatility, while a difference even considerably higher can be insufficient in case of high volatility. So the empirical definition of seats marginality need to be temporally and nationally contestualised. For this reason great caution is necessary in the use of concepts such as electoral marginality and competitive seats, particularly when - as for the Italian 1994 elections - no comparison with previous elections is possible concerning the inclination of

electorates to modify their previous vote orientations. However, we feel that the identification of marginal seats is important for two main reasons: a) a high number of marginal districts indicates - *coeteris paribus* - a higher degree of electoral uncertainty and competitiveness; 2) a high relative percentage of marginal seats won by a given party or cartel are an indicator of electoral vulnerability. Parties that win many marginal seats are potentially subject to considerable future losses as a consequence of even minor swings of votes.

All the other seats where the distance between the winner and the runner up is higher than 8% are defined as less competitive. We have operated a further distinction between **safe seats**, where the distance is between 8 and 32% of the votes, and **fortress seats**, where the distance exceeds 32%. The data reported in Table 9 gives the idea of a very limited competitiveness in the plurality arena. Throughout the country less than one third of the seats can be regarded as 'competitive'. One every 8 seats is a fortress seat, out of reach for any opposition. In the Centre, one seat every four is of this kind. In the country, as well as in any of its geographical areas and branches (only exception the Senate in the South) the absolute majority of seats is represented by safe seats.

Within the context of a generally low level of competitiveness, Table 9 also indicates crucial geographical and branch

differences. Let's look at this aspect with particular reference to the marginal sets. For this reason in Table 9 we have added, next to the number of marginal seats, their percentage by area (row %) and their percentage within each area (column %) (see Table 9). Marginal seats are 138 in the Chamber and 90 in the Senate: respectively 29% and 38.8% of the total of each branch. The Senate results by far more competitive than the Chamber. A difference of 10 percentage points is not a minor one, particularly if one considers that a quota of the marginal seats in the Chamber is due to the divorce between Forza Italia and MSI-AN in several Southern districts, a situation which did not occurred in the Senate. From the point of view of their geographical distribution, the majority of the marginal seats is in the South, as expected. Both in the Chamber and in the Senate, marginal seats represent more than half the districts of this area (respectively 50.7 and 67.6%) and in both cases the Southern marginal seats represent an almost identical percentage (79 and 78.9%) of all competitive districts of the country. These figures confirm once again that the South has been the only area really in competition in the March elections. On the contrary, the Centre is the less competitive area: in the Senate only one marginal district and in the Chamber only seven. Summing up, the electoral outcome was determined in the South, and particularly in the Senate Southern districts. In fact, the 71 marginal seats of this branch in the South represent not only, as we have seen, the 78.9% of all marginal seats in the Senate, but

also 30.6 % of all districts of the Senate. Even a small vote difference in this area and branch would have modified significantly the parliamentary outcome of these elections.

The last point to be investigated is the partisan orientation of the marginal seat winners. The right wing Poli have won the majority of these seats (56.5% in the Chamber and 54.4% in the Senate). However, these victories are relatively fewer than in the total of all seats. The Progressisti obtain a good percentage of the marginal seats: 40.6 and 43.3% in the Chamber and in the Senate. These percentages are higher than those the Progressisti obtain over the total of all seats. This performance allows them to re-equilibrate their parliamentary position in both branches. So, in conclusion, the marginal seats contests are more favourable to the Progressisti than to the Poli, and the former 'depend' upon these seats more than the latter.

Once gain the data concerning the South senatorial districts offer the best description of the differential outcome in the two chambers. The Progressisti have won altogether 96 plurality seats in the Senate. Of these 48 are in the South and 32 of them (that is the two thirds) are marginal seats. On the whole the Progressisti have won the 45.1% of the marginal seats in the South, against 52.1% for the right coalitions. This positive result testifies both the competitiveness of the left in the South and, at the same time, its electoral vulnerability. However, the fact that the left won most of

these districts with low vote percentages, facing a right often internally divided, seems to suggest that vulnerability is a more realistic assessment of the prospects for the left in the South.

Having completed the descriptive analysis of electoral competitiveness, we turn now to the discussion of the factors that explain it. In particular the key questions are: why the high territorial and branch differentiation in the levels of competitiveness and why the left did better in the Senate generally and in the South particularly. Given that in this article we limit our analysis to the structure of the competition (leaving aside what concerns directly the overall strength of the parties) the following sections deal with 1) the number of candidates, 2) the level of concentration of the vote, 3) the basic patterns of competition and 4) the comparative electoral performance of candidates and their cartels.

The fragmentation on the supply-side: the number of candidates

The introduction of the majority system has not produced a radical reduction of the number of candidates, as one might have expected. Quite the contrary, as compared with the previous PR elections, the new system fostered a multiplication of candidacies. Most of them had very little or no chance of victory, even though their presence was by no means irrelevant for the pattern of competition. Table 10 reports the frequency

distribution of districts according to the number of candidates. What strikes is obviously the high number of competing candidate, by far excessive for a plurality formula. The average number of candidates per district is higher in the Senate (6.3) than in the Chamber (4.5). In 44 senatorial districts we find the incredible figure of 9 candidates. Only two contests of this kind exist in the Chamber. In the Senate, 66.8% of the districts is contested by more than 5 candidates; in the Chamber these seats amount only to 13.9%. In the senatorial districts the candidate proliferation is higher in the North than in the South, whereas in the Chamber the contrary is true.

(Table 10 about here)

What are the reasons for these marked differences. In our opinion the phenomenon is largely the result of the different incentives offered by the new electoral law in the two branches. A considerable number of candidates has preferred to run for the Senate because of a number of advantages for 'minor' candidates, and particularly for those linked to parties and/or movements with a strong local or regional basis. For each potential candidate, the choice where to present itself is influenced by three different factors which constitute the structure of incentives of any electoral system: 1) the qualifications required for running (signatures, linkages with lists or other candidates, etc.); 2) the formula

for the seat allocation; 3) the rules for access to public funds. In the Italian elections of 1994 these three factors were so structured.

First, only in the Senate it was possible to stand as 'individual candidates' without any linkage with parties or cartels. On the contrary, in the Chamber the link with a list participating to the proportional distribution of seats was compulsory independently of the will of the candidate to participate to the proportional seats component. This difference implied a higher organisational burden for the candidates of the Chamber. Among other things, they were compelled to collect both the signature for their candidacy in the district and the signature for the presentation of the list in the regional proportional constituency. Second, the formula for the distribution of the proportional seats is more favourable toward the local/regional parties in the Senate than in the Chamber. In the Chamber representation is conditional to the overcoming of a 4% threshold at the national level. On the contrary, for the Senate the electoral thresholds is not set *a priori* by the electoral law, but it results from the application at the regional constituency level of the d'Hondt method⁷. For a locally based party or movement such a threshold is unquestionably easier to overcome than the national 4% of the votes for the Chamber. The fact that the Lega Alpina Lombarda - a sub-regional movement - had managed to get one senatorial proportional seat is a demonstration of

this case. Third, in order to get access to the public finance for the Senate it is sufficient for an individual candidate to have achieved the 15% of the votes in the district and for a group of candidates to have managed to elect at least one candidate in the district or to have obtained the 5% of the valid votes in the region. Even in this case, the requirement for the Chamber are considerably more costly: the 4% of the votes at the national level. This threshold is lowered to the 3% if the party in question has managed to elect district candidate.

The sum of these incentives (and the second in particular) provide a strong explanation of the different fragmentation of the two branches ⁸. They do not explain, of course, why the average number of senatorial candidate is 7.8 (with heights of 9.1 in Lombardia and 8.7 in Piemonte) in the North and of 5.5 in the South. This explanation lies in environmental aspects interacting with the structure of incentives offered by the electoral law.

(Figure 1 about here)

The explanation of the higher fragmentation of the Senate candidacies was necessary but in this context we are primarily interested in using it as an independent variable; that is, to investigate whether such fragmentation of the supply has influenced the electoral results, and particularly the level of competitiveness and the distribution of victories by electoral

cartel. For the Chamber the relation between candidacies fragmentation and winning threshold is negative. The latter declines when the number of candidates increases. In the Senate, on the contrary, no relationship exists between these two variables (see Figure 1). The distance between the first two candidates is in no way correlated with the number of competing candidates neither in the Chamber nor in the Senate. Over 700 plurality seats in the two branches, those with 9 or 10 candidates show a mean distance higher than in the districts with a lower number of candidates. In the Senate, the most competitive races (those with the lowest distance) are found in the districts with 4 candidates, and also in the districts with 8. Only for the Chamber there are signs of a decline of the electoral distance (and therefore of increasing competitiveness) when the fragmentation increases. But these are, indeed, only weak signs.

At first sight it seems that candidacies fragmentation and competitiveness are not related. However, the fragmentation in the Senate is greater than in the Chamber, the winning threshold and the electoral distance between the first two candidates in the Senate are lower, the left wins more in the Senate. All this seems to suggest that the better performance of the left in the Senate is due to its higher fragmentation. If this were the case one should find a positive correlation between the left victories and the level of fragmentation. But it is not so. Not only there is no significant correlation at the national level neither in the Chamber nor in the Senate,

but even in the South the picture is the same. The left gains more seats in this area, but not because here the number of candidates is greater than elsewhere.

In sum, contrary to what has been suggested in the aftermath of the elections, the number of candidates per district is not an explanatory factor. However in order to explain the final outcome the relevant variable is the voters' response, that is the number of votes actually collected by the numerous minor candidates. It is the capacity of these candidates to get more or less significant electoral support that might have determine the outcome of the competition among the major candidates. This is what we define as fragmentation on the 'demand side'.

The fragmentation on the demand-side: concentration/dispersion of the vote

When the dimension of candidate fragmentation is combined with that of the vote dispersion among candidates, the conclusion is that it is necessary to distinguish between the 'fragmentation which counts' and that which is irrelevant. The former counts exactly because it subtracts votes to the competition among the major candidates. The latter does not count because it does not produce this effect. The issue is how to study the "fragmentation which counts". In this essay , we will start from the notion of the **dispersed vote** , defined as the difference between the total of the valid votes and the vote obtained by the first two candidates. In other words, the

dispersed vote is the complement of the vote concentration index of the first two candidates: the greater the vote concentration, the lower the dispersed vote. The underlying assumption in this case is that the real electoral competition is the one between the two major candidates and that all or quasi all the dispersed vote in a plurality system is potentially available for the first two candidates once the system gets consolidated and the voters learn the new rules of the game. The other candidates may be a disturbing factor, but they are not really competitive.

The notion of dispersed vote however does not make any distinction among minor candidates. Such a distinction can be useful in the Italian case given the high level of fragmentation on the supply side. For this reason, next to the dispersed vote we will pay attention to two different types of votes to minor candidates: the residual vote and the peripheral vote. Both are sub-sets of the dispersed vote. The **residual vote** is the difference between the total valid votes and the sum of the votes gained by the first four candidates. Why four? In most districts next to the candidates of the three national cartels (PL or PBG, Patto and Progressisti) we find a fourth candidate with such a political profile that he/she cannot be regarded as a minor candidate (for instance, the MSI-AN candidate in the North or the candidate of the Lista Pannella). The **peripheral vote** is the vote given to local candidates not linked to any national cartel or major party.

More precisely, we have operationally defined such a type of vote as the vote given to candidates that : 1) in each district have got less than 4 % of the vote, and 2) did not belong to national lists, and were not connected to lists which obtained more than 4% of the votes in the same district. It is important to emphasise that, in order not to inflate the peripheral vote, these conditions are cumulative.

(Table 11 about here)

In Table 11 we have reported the mean levels of the dispersed, residual and peripheral vote by branch and by area. The dispersed vote shows the following features: 1) it is high, pointing to the generally low vote concentration on the first two candidates; 2) it is systematically higher for the Senate than for the Chamber (10 or more % points); and 3) it is roughly the same in all the areas. In the Senate, the candidates beyond the first two collected more than a third of the vote. However, it is clear that the vote concentration on the first two candidates can indicate the local strength of a single party/cartel and therefore being a misleading indicator of the competitiveness of the first two candidates. This is one of the reasons to resort to other indicators that capture better the idea of the 'shrinking of the electorate' available to the major candidates, those belonging to the national cartels.

The residual vote which orients itself towards the candidates beyond the first four is such an indicator. Compared with the dispersed vote, the difference between Chamber and Senate is even bigger. For the Chamber, the vote is almost entirely concentrated on the first four candidates whereas in the Senate 14 % of the electorate has given its vote to candidates placed after the first four. Even in the case of the residual vote territorial differences are not particularly striking.

With the third indicator - the peripheral vote - we intend to measure what proportion of the vote directs itself to local candidates, non partisan candidates, and "self-made candidates". The figures of the peripheral vote do not modify the general picture so far discussed, but for an important element: in the Southern senatorial districts the peripheral vote coincides almost entirely with the residual vote. Notwithstanding that in this area the number of minor candidates is lower than in the North, they collect by far a greater share of the votes. We have shown before that the most competitive arena is precisely the Senate in the South and it is therefore plausible that one of the causes of this greater competitiveness be the significant presence of this type of vote⁹.

To explore further this hypothesis we have run several tests to determine the relationship between the level of the dispersed, residual and peripheral vote and the cartel of the winners. For the dispersed and residual vote, no significant

result has emerged from this analysis. The level of the dispersed or residual vote is not associated with, and therefore it does not influence, the victory of the Progressisti or of the candidates of the Poli¹⁰. The presence of a strong residual vote lowers the winning threshold, but it does not help explain the victories of the left versus the right¹¹. The picture is different in the case of the dispersed vote. The relationship between competitiveness (intended as closeness of the race) and the dispersed vote in the Senate (but not in the Chamber) is in this case confirmed. The districts showing the highest percentage of dispersed vote are those where the competition between the first two candidates is greater (see Table 12)

(Table 12 about here)

We can draw the conclusion at this point that the dispersed vote is certainly an important element for the explanation of the final outcome of these elections, particularly in the South. In this area, the absence of a dominant political force after the demise of the DC and the regionalist nature of the electoral system for the Senate have left room for a plethora of minor local candidates which have been able to capture a considerable amount of the floating vote. This has lowered significantly the winning threshold in the single member districts and it has increased electoral competitiveness. The consequence has been a more balanced electoral outcome compared to the North and the Centre between the Progressisti

cartel which has obtained 45.7% of the single-member seats and the right-wing coalition which has received 51.4%.

At this point in the development of our argument we need to prove that the dispersed vote is predominantly moderate. If so, we could draw the conclusion that this type of vote might in the future alter the electoral balance in this area in favour of the right. Indeed, given the fact that the high level of the dispersed vote has lowered the winning threshold, and this in turn has favoured the Progressisti, we conclude that any future reduction of such type of vote will benefit the right and will put an end to the 'anomaly' of a competitive South. Let us take a closer look at the elements that support the hypothesis on the moderate nature of the dispersed vote in the South. One is the comparison between the mean % vote of the winning candidates of the PBG in the Chamber (44.4 %) and in the Senate (36.2 %) in the South. It is plausible to affirm that the winning threshold in the Senate is so much lower because here the dispersed vote amounts to 12.66 % of the total vote, whereas in the Chamber is only 1.10 %. For the Progressisti the picture is entirely different. In the Chamber they win with a mean vote of 37.8 % and they get 33.9 % of the seats, whereas in the Senate they win with a mean vote of 35.1 % and they get 45.7 % of the seats. It follows that the lowering of the winning threshold benefit them considerably. The possible explanation is that the Progressisti have a core support of about 35 % of the votes versus more than 40 % for the PBG and that only the amount of the dispersed vote (which,

as we know, is significant only in the Senate) allows them to be (more) competitive with the moderate candidates. Even in the North the winning threshold is lower in the Senate compared to the Chamber. However, in this case the Progressisti are unable to benefit from it because the gap between their core support and that of the PL is too high for the dispersed vote (which is also here consistent) to make any difference ¹².

Another way to control the hypothesis of the moderate nature of the dispersed vote is to check whether there is any correlation between such a vote and the votes given to the candidates of the PBG. If there were a significant correlation we should be able to find that the PBG candidates have received fewer votes where the level of the dispersed vote is higher. Figure 2 shows that an inverse correlation between these two variables exists. Its value is -0.378 which corresponds to an explained variance of about 14 %. This figure is the more significant if we compare it with the value of 0.0122 of the correlation between the % vote of the Progressisti candidates and the level of the dispersed vote. These two variables are independent from each other.

(Figure 2 about here)

The basic patterns of competition and their variants

One of the main features of these elections is the absence of a national pattern of competition. Such a pattern exists when

in all or almost all districts throughout the country we find the same parties or the same cartels structuring voters' choices. In our case this has not happened since in many districts we find, alongside the candidates of the national coalitions, also local candidates who have collected, as we saw previously, a substantial amount of votes. Moreover, and more importantly, the national cartels were not the same throughout the country since their make-up was different in different areas. This is true particularly of the right. As a result, the high number of candidates per district on the one hand and the territorial differentiation of the electoral coalitions on the other have produced a mosaic of patterns of competition making these elections an interesting case of 'competition of variable geography' (Di Virgilio 1995). Out of this mosaic, we have identified three basic patterns and three variants by taking into consideration the four candidates who have shown to be competitive in each district (Table 13) ¹³.

(Table 13 about here)

We define the first of these patterns as the 'Centre-North pattern'. Its main feature is the systematic division of the right. MSI-AN has its own candidates in almost all of the districts in the North and in the Centre. Yet, in spite of this competition from the right, Forza Italia and the Lega Nord have succeeded in getting the overwhelming majority of the seats in this area. Actually, this division may have helped the PL coalition to project a more moderate and centrist image. The

result in the Senate is somewhat different; the PL wins fewer seats, but this is more the consequence of the greater competitiveness of the left in this arena rather than the effect of the split of the right. The conclusion is that in the North the division of the right has caused no major damage to it. It actually might have been a clever tactical move.

The same pattern characterised the electoral competition in the Centre. Here the outcome, as we know, is radically different. The left wins almost all of the seats leaving the PL just with three seats in the Chamber (in the Emilia region) and one in the Senate in the same constituency. Here the division of the right affects considerably the outcome. It is highly unlikely that the Progressisti would have been able to do so well in Toscana and particularly in the Marche if the right had been united. To support this hypothesis, we refer to the low winning threshold in many districts and to the small margins of victory between the winning candidate of the Progressisti and the runner up of the PL. The Centre-North pattern has a variant (with few cases, however) based on the presence of 'other' candidates. These candidates appear in our data because they have squeezed out the MSI-AN candidate from the first four positions in 10 districts in the Chamber and 15 in the Senate. Even so however the outcome does not change.

The structure of competition in the South is much more varied. The basic patterns are two since, unlike in the North and in the Centre, the right is at times united and at times divided

(patterns 3 and 6). Moreover, there is the Lista Pannella that has an impact on the district races, sharing this role with the 'other' candidates (patterns 4 and 5). In the South, the division of the right does not pay (pattern 6). Out of the 41 cases belonging to this pattern in the Chamber, the Progressisti win 31 (75.6%). In the Senate they actually win all of them, but the cases are few because in this arena the right was not divided. When the right is united, the victory margins shrink, but the left remains competitive. The Lista Pannella is a surprise. Its (relative) success makes a significant difference. In fact, the PBG does better when the LP candidate is able to be among the first four (pattern 4): in the Chamber out of 26 seats it gets 21, and in the Senate it picks up 21 out of 29. The outcome of left-right competition is completely different (in the sense of being more balanced) when the place of the LP candidate is taken by one of the 'others' (pattern 3). The inference is that the LP subtracts votes to the left, whereas the independent candidates (the 'others') do the same thing with the right. This is consistent with the evidence provided on the influence of the dispersed vote, but the point needs to be tested further.

The last pattern (5) is based on three-way races. The fourth candidate is missing because it does not meet our criteria of relevance. This pattern represents a puzzle, partly because of the limited number of available cases in the Senate. In the Chamber (60 cases) the absence of the fourth candidate coincides with the predominance of the right; the percentage of

victories is quite similar to that of pattern 3 where the fourth candidate is one of the 'others'. Still, with this pattern the left does better than in the 'Pannella variant'. In the Senate the picture is the opposite: the left wins 8 out of the 12 seats, but the number of cases is too small to support any meaningful conclusion.

In short, the analysis based on the patterns of competition helps us define new points and refine previous observations:

1. the left is more competitive in the Senate;
2. the divided right (pattern 6) loses in the Chamber a significant number of seats ;
3. the relative success of the Lista Pannella (whose candidates are among the first four in 35 seats in the Chamber and 30 in the Senate) is associated with a poor performance of the left ;
4. the presence of independent candidates (the 'others') (pattern 3) turns out to benefit the left much more in the Senate than in the Chamber.

Candidates versus their Electoral Cartels

As we pointed out, a most important feature of these elections was the fact that the main competing actors were not parties, but party coalitions or cartels. These cartels have been formed on the basis of agreements on the allotment of plurality seats among their members. Such agreements called for the presentation in each single-member district of just one

candidate nominated by one of the cartel's components, but representing the cartel as a whole. Our purpose in this section is to study the electoral performance of these cartels, that is how voters have responded to the choice of candidates made by them. To this end, we will try to measure the extent to which the candidates of each coalition have been able 1) to retain all the votes in their target area and eventually 2) to reach out of their area and seize other votes. We will refer to these two 'qualities' of candidates as their *capacity of internal mobilisation* and their *capacity of external attraction* .

To study this dimension of candidate performance we can use the data supplied by the second ballot for the Chamber, the list vote. Thanks to this vote, we can compare the votes received by the plurality candidates of each cartel with the total amount of the list votes collected by the parties belonging to the same cartel. For example, we take the candidates of *Rifondazione Comunista* (RC) who have run in the single-member districts of the Chamber as representatives of the *Progressisti* and we compute the mean vote they have received; at the same time we compute the mean vote received in the same districts by all the *Progressisti* lists connected to the RC candidates. Finally, we compare the two set of data. The list vote is important because it can be considered a good indicator of the quality (that is, the safety) of the district. Following up on our example, if the lists of the *Progressisti*

get in a given district a high percentage of votes is plausible to infer that the district is a good district for the left candidates, i.e. a safe district. Behind this conclusion there is however an important assumption: that the list vote be a sincere vote, a vote that reflects the 'true' preferences of the voters. We think this assumption, in the context of these elections, holds well. Unlike the expression of a majority vote, the list vote allows the voter to express his/her partisan identity without having to resort to sophisticated strategic calculations (D'Alimonte and Chiaramonte, 1995) ¹⁴. On the contrary, it is less plausible that voters, who reject a disliked plurality candidate, decide not to vote for their most preferred party for the only reason that it is connected to a candidate they don't appreciate.

By comparing candidate and list votes for each cartel, three possible results may occur: 1) the candidate vote is greater than that for the supporting lists; 2) no difference between the two values; 3) the list vote is greater than the candidate vote. These results identify different types of candidates ¹⁵. The first case defines the 'excellent candidate', the one who is capable of reaching out and attracting new votes in addition to mobilising fully his/her target electorate. This means that there are voters who voted for him/her, though they didn't vote in the proportional arena for any of the lists of the cartel he/she belongs to. Therefore this difference can be attributed to a personal vote, a vote given to the candidate because of his/her personal qualities rather than for his/her

party or cartel affiliation. The second case identifies the 'good candidate', the one who is able to mobilise all of his/her target vote. He/she picks up all of the votes within the cartel, but none outside of it. The cartel works well. It can win or lose, but in any case the candidate chosen to represent it does not help or hinder. The third case in our list, and the last we deal with here, is that of the 'weak candidate'. He/she not only does not reach out and seizes votes outside his/her target cartel electorate, but, what is worse, he/she is unable to retain all of the votes within it. The cartel does not perform well in this case. It loses pieces of its potential electorate. The candidate is not appreciated at all ; he/she is actually rejected by some of the voters who identify themselves with the parties affiliated to his/her cartel.

This latter case, which obviously hinders the cartel making it less competitive, may depend from the existence of two modes of electoral behaviour : the strategic vote or the ideological vote. Strategic voting takes place when voters prefer not to vote for their most preferred candidate in their district because they perceive him/her as a losing candidate. They don't want 'to waste' their ballot and choose to vote for a candidate with greater chance of success. Ideological voting takes place when voters refuse to vote for the candidate who represents their most preferred cartel in their district. Whatever the reason behind their distaste for the candidate, they prefer to abstain or actually vote for a candidate of

another cartel. They 'exit' the cartel. However, we assume that both strategic voters and ideological voters cast their list vote in favour of the party they prefer the most within the cartel. They defect in one arena, but remain loyal in the other. If so, the difference between these two types of votes is an indicator of the low level of electoral cohesion of the cartel and of the lack of loyalty of its voters. The voters, by accepting or rejecting the cartel candidates, act as the ultimate and exclusive judges of their quality. Rejecting the cartel candidates amounts to outright defection. A high rate of defection indicates a low capacity of internal mobilisation and consequently a weak *coalitional discipline* of the voters. It follows that a cartel with a low level of internal discipline is less competitive than others.

(Table 14 about here)

Let 's look now at the data in Table 14. These data allow us to check the hypotheses we formulated on the electoral cohesion of the cartels. We will start from the Progressisti. The first observation has to do with the allotment of the seats to the various components of the coalition. Rete and Indipendenti di Sinistra are the groups most disfavoured. Their candidates, in fact, have had to compete in difficult districts, where the mean vote for the left was low ¹⁶. This fact explains both the low rate of success of these candidates (see the last column of the table) and the significant difference between their mean

vote and the cartel's mean vote. In these cases, the evidence supports the hypothesis that the problem lies with the districts, not with the candidates. Actually, the candidates of the Rete and of the Indipendenti have done relatively well in these difficult districts. In fact, they get there almost as many votes as the number of proportional votes received by all the lists belonging to the Progressisti cartel. In other words, these candidates have done better than their more fortunate colleagues, like those of the PDS and RC, who have received on average less than the list votes of the Progressisti, though they were running in good districts (compare the list vote for the Progressisti cartel with the votes to the PDS and RC candidates).

This is the most important observation we can draw from the table: the candidates of the leftist cartel perform systematically worse than the lists of the Progressisti (leaving aside the two candidates of Rinascita Socialista and those of the Rete). In some of the cases, the difference between the two set of values is minimal (Verdi and Indipendenti), but in other cases is significant. The RC candidates lose on average 2.8% of the votes compared to the cartel lists. What is really impressive is not so much the individual comparisons, but the overall result, its systematic feature. The candidates of the left show a weak capacity of internal mobilisation. When they perform well (in very few cases), they are at best able to retain all or almost all their own target electorate, but nothing more. They have no capacity

of external attraction whatsoever. One possible explanation is that the 'summability' of the leftist electorates is lower than the 'coalitional capability' of the elites. After all, the leftist elites have been able to find an agreement on the parcelling out of the districts among the different components of the Progressisti cartel in spite of their high number (8). However, when the product of this agreement has been offered to the voters, some of them have rejected it. This behaviour depends on several factors. We have synthesised them partially through the concepts of ideological vote and strategic vote, though we are unable at this stage to measure their specific impact.

Strategic voting is a form of rational or useful voting. It not only requires a precise knowledge of how electoral rules actually work, but also substantial analytical skills. Voters must be able to calculate correctly the possible effects of their vote. Probably, the strategic vote has had a limited impact on the Progressisti candidates. Ideological voting is radically different. It is a more 'emotional' form of behaviour. This does not mean necessarily that the ideological vote never has a rational component. Quite the opposite. Those voters who decide not to cast their ballot for a candidate proposed by the cartel where they find their most preferred party, do so for a reason. And the reason lies in the ideological distance that separates their position in the political space from that of the proposed candidate in their district. If the distance is too great these voters, prefer to

abstain whatever the consequences for the cartel. This is more straightforward and therefore more instinctive vote. For these reasons, we tend to believe that the 'malaise' of the Italian left has to be found here, in its weak ideological cohesion at the mass level.

On this point, the findings pertaining to Rifondazione Comunista - the party located at the extreme left - are very telling. Its candidates are those who perform the worst, though they win. Actually, their rate of success is the highest of all the leftist groups : 46.6 % of its candidates get elected. This rate is even higher than that of the PDS. Yet, RC wins because its candidates are placed in safe districts, not because its candidates are able to attract votes. Quite to the contrary, they lose on average 2,8 % of the combined left vote. Our hypothesis is that this high rate of defection is due to ideological voters, voters of the moderate left who, being offered a RC candidate in their district, simply refuse to vote for him/her. The same hypothesis we can apply to the case of Alleanza Democratica (AD) candidates, who are also unable to mobilise all of the left electorate. In this case, too, it is likely that voters of the extreme left who consider the AD candidate too far ideologically choose not to vote for him/her.

The ideological distance at the mass level (not at the elites level) is an important conceptual key for explaining both the

outcome of these elections from the point of view of the left and its future prospects. The 'summability' of its different electoral segments is a necessary condition for the left if it wants to win in the future. The replacement of PR with a predominantly majoritarian system has made this problem even more critical. Previously, in the age of proportional representation, the summing up of the leftist votes could remain a responsibility of the elites, without being subject to immediate and uncertain electoral tests. In the plurality age, the electoral test is everything. The sum is done in the electoral arena, not in Parliament or in party headquarters. Of course, in light of the results of these elections, it is quite clear that it is not enough for the Italian left to sum up its votes to be able to win. But the data suggest strongly that in order to become more competitive it must *before anything else* reduce its internal ideological distance.

The performance of the right is quite different. Whereas the Progressisti were not able to mobilise completely the leftist vote, let alone attract others, we can see that both the PL and PBG candidates (with the only marginal exception of the UC within the PBG, but it is only one case) perform better than their respective lists. The record of the candidates of FI within the PL (+ 3.7%) and that of the LN candidates (+ 3.4 %) is significant. But even more significant is the performance of the MSI-AN candidates within the PBG: not only they do better than the PBG lists (+ 3.3 %), but they also

outperform the FI candidates who get instead only 0.3 % more than the list votes. The finding about MSI-AN deserves to be emphasised because it is a relevant indicator of the interchangeability of moderate candidates in the South. We could have expected that the MSI-AN candidates, whose party is located at the extreme right of the political spectrum, would show a capacity of internal mobilisation inferior to that of the FI candidates. This is not the case. Their capacity is actually greater than that of the FI candidates and even greater than that of the CCD. In addition, the mean vote of these candidates (37.8%) is higher on the whole than that of the PBG candidates (37.2 %) and their rate of success (77.5 %) is greater than that of the FI candidates (57.1 %) and greater than those of the CCD (61.9 %). This finding might be influenced by the quality of the districts where the MSI-AN candidates were present, but this explanation does not really hold up. In fact, the evidence on the list vote shows that the PBG was weaker precisely in those districts where AN candidates were running rather than where we find FI or CCD candidates.

In conclusion, the data on the PBG show the MSI-AN as the most effective force of the cartel. In part, this may be the effect of the greater social embeddedness of the MSI-AN compared to FI and/or of the greater visibility of its candidates. This qualification however does not weaken the surprising fact represented by the absence of any residual ideological bias *vis-à-vis* MSI-AN within the electorate of the

right. The nomination of more extremist candidates, instead of hindering the cartel, seems on the contrary to help it. Unlike those of the left, the votes of the right are 'additionable'. This makes the PBG candidates not only interchangeable, but in some cases even more appealing than those of other parties outside the cartel. The ideological vote is not a problem for the right. The problem of the right, if any, is the dispersed vote in the South. More generally, we can conclude that the capacity of mobilisation of all the candidates of the Poli may hint at the presence of strategic voting in their favour. Such a phenomenon could be the result of the perception by centrist voters (for example, *Patto per l'Italia* sympathisers) that the Poli candidates were the only credible competitors against the *Progressisti*.

Conclusions

In this essay we have interpreted the outcome of the March 1994 elections looking at the patterns of competition that have characterised the plurality component of the new electoral system. The first point we have analysed is the electoral origin of the divided parliament. The first and more direct cause of the divided parliament is to be found in the apparently marginal but actually crucial differences in the electoral law for the two branches. The total *scorporo* of the Senate has hammered the winning side (the Poli) much more than the partial *scorporo* of the lower Chamber. However, the difference between the two branches does not derive exclusively

from the compensating effect of the proportional component. Having discarded the hypothesis of the different orientation of the youth vote, we have pointed out to 1) the higher proportion of votes collected by the Left alliance in the Senate as compared to the Chamber; 2) the higher fragmentation of the vote in the senatorial contests; 3) the damages produced to the right by the peripheral and localistic candidates vote. These factors have lowered substantially the winning threshold in several areas of the country and particularly in the South, allowing the left cartel to compete more successfully.

The second major aspect highlighted concerns the territorial differences in the distribution of votes. The plurality elections have clearly shown that both for the Chamber and the Senate the country is divided into three areas, two of which have been totally non-competitive (the North hegemonised by the right and the Centre hegemonised by the Left) and one (the South) characterised by competitive pattern and a balanced outcome.

The third major point concerns the electoral cohesion of the cartels. The possibility to compare in the Chamber results the lists votes with the plurality votes to the candidates offers the opportunity to evaluate the compatibility of the different party electorates. It was shown that while the right wing cartel manages to mobilise its entire proportional constituency in favour of its candidates, the left is unable to do so. We have attributed this phenomenon to the spread and persistence

in the left of an 'ideological vote' (and to a less extent also of a 'strategic vote'), which find difficult to accept candidates of allied parties who are not its own. Ideology fosters partisanship and belongings, but hinders vote transferability, which, in the context of plurality formula with multi-party electoral cartels is a crucial key to victory.

Beyond the electoral defection attributable to ideological and strategic factors, it is unquestionable that in the plurality contest the left is not competitive because it has too few votes. The most astonishing result of these elections is the percentage of votes the lists and the candidates of the left (the entire left!) have gained in the North: respectively 25% and 25.7% (Chamber). But even in the South, where the performance was better, the left can count on slightly more than 30% of the votes. With these percentages it is very hard to be competitive in plurality races. In addition to this, without electoral cohesion not even a left electoral base close to 40 % of the votes can ensure success. This is why the question of the additionability of the leftist votes is just as important as that of finding new voters. In these specific elections the left has avoided a *débaclé* thanks to the fore mentioned special conditions. But these are aleatory factors. As actors learn better how the new electoral system works, it is unlikely they will help in the future.

For sure the Italian electoral market is today by far more 'open' than it was previously the case (Diamanti and Mannheim, 1994; Sani, 1992). This higher volatility of the vote combined with the amplifying effects of the plurality formula leave open the door to results even radically different from those of the March elections. This, however, will not occur unless the left cartel will manage to become more competitive in the sense specified in this paper. And without a competitive left, that is a left with a credible chance of victory, the Italian party system is bounded to remain, as it has been until now, non competitive.

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Tables & Figures

Table 1: Number of single member districts and of Pr seats for each constituency (Chamber and Senate)

Chamber				Senate			
constituencies	Total Seats	Single-member seats	Pr seats	constituencies	Total Seats	Single-member seats	Pr seats
Valle d'Aosta	1	1	0	Valle d'Aosta	1	1	0
Piemonte 1	25	19	6	Piemonte	23	17	6
Piemonte 2	23	17	6				
Lombardia 1	41	31	10	Lombardia	47	35	12
Lombardia 2	42	32	10				
Lombardia 3	15	11	4				
Trentino A.A.	10	8	2	Trentino A.A.	7	6	1
Veneto 1	29	22	7	Veneto	23	17	6
Veneto 2	20	15	5				
Friuli V.G.	13	10	3	Friuli V.G.	7	5	2
Liguria	19	14	5	Liguria	9	6	2
Emilia Rom.	43	32	11	Emilia Rom.	21	15	6
Toscana	39	29	10	Toscana	19	14	5
Umbria	9	7	2	Umbria	7	5	2
Marche	16	12	4	Marche	8	6	2
Lazio 1	42	32	10	Lazio	28	21	7
Lazio 2	15	11	4				
Abruzzo	14	11	3	Abruzzo	7	5	2
Molise	4	3	1	Molise	2	2	0
Campania 1	33	25	8	Campania	30	22	6
Campania 2	29	22	7				
Puglia	45	34	11	Puglia	22	16	5
Basilicata	7	5	2	Basilicata	7	5	2
Calabria	23	17	6	Calabria	11	8	3
Sicilia 1	27	20	7	Sicilia	27	20	7
Sicilia 2	28	21	7				
Sardegna	18	14	4	Sardegna	9	6	3
Italy	630	475	155		315	232	83

Table 2: From the old to the new political parties

parties (in the 1980's)	parties (in the 1990's)
<i>traditional parties:</i>	
DC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partito Popolare Italiano (January 1994) - Rete-Movimento democratico (Orlando) (1991) - Popolari per la riforma (Segni) (October 1992) - Patto Segni (November 1993) - Cristiano Sociali (Gorrieri, Carniti) (1993) - Centro cristiano democratico (Mastella, D'Onofrio, Casini) - Alleanza Nazionale (Fiori, Selva) (January 1994)
PCI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PDS (January 1991) - RC (February 1991) - Rete-Movimento Democratico (Novelli) (1991)
PSI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PS (Del Turco) (January 1994) - Rinascita Socialista (Mattina, Benvenuto) (June 1993) - Alleanza Democratica (Ruffolo, Benvenuto) - Patto Segni (Amato) (June 1993) - Federazione Liberal Socialista - Unione dei democratici e dei socialisti (Boniver, Intini, Piro) (Autumn 1993)
MSI-Destra Nazionale	- MSI-Alleanza Nazionale (January 1994)
PRI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PRI (La Malfa) - Alleanza Democratica (Bogi, Visentini)
PLI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - PLI - Federazione dei liberali (Zanone, Patuelli) - Unione di Centro (Biondi Costa) (Autumn 1993) - Alleanza democratica
PSDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Unione dei democratici e dei socialisti (Ferri) - Alleanza democratica
<i>new formations:</i>	
Partito Radicale	- Lista Pannella (1992) - Riformatori (1994)
Lega veneta (1983)	
Lega Lombarda (1987)	Lega Nord (1991)
Forza sole che ride (1985)	
Forza Arcobaleno (1987)	Verdi (December 1990)
	Forza Italia (February 1994)

Source: A. Di Virgilio, *Dai partiti ai poli: la politica delle alleanze*, in S. Bartolini and R. D'Alimonte (ed.), *Maggioritario ma non .e elezioni politiche del 1994*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1995, p. 187.

Table 3: The party composition of electoral cartels

electoral cartels	parties
LEFT	
Progressisti	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Rifondazione comunista - Rete - Movimento democratico - Partito democratico della sinistra - Rinascita socialista - Verdi - Partito socialista - Alleanza democratica - Cristiano sociali
CENTRE	
Patto per l'Italia	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Partito popolare italiano - Patto Segni Popolari per la riforma Partito repubblicano (La Malfa) socialisti (Amato) liberali (Zanone)
RIGHT	
Polo della libertà	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forza Italia - Unione di Centro - Centro cristiano-democratico - Polo liberal- democratico - Lega Nord - [Riformatori]
Polo del buon governo	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Forza Italia - Unione di Centro - Centro cristiano-democratico - Polo liberal- democratico - Msi-Alleanza nazionale - [Unione dei democratici e dei socialisti]

Source: A. Di Virgilio, *Dai partiti ai poli: la politica delle alleanze*, in S. Bartolini and R. D'Alimonte (ed.), *Maggioritario ma non troppo. Le elezioni politiche del 1994*, Bologna, Il Mulino, 1995, p. 191

Table 4: Seat distribution of main electoral cartels by type of seats, branch and area

	Progressisti			Patto per l'Italia			Poli (1)			Others		
	P.S.	Pr.S.	T.S.	P.S.	Pr.S.	T.S.	P.S.	Pr.S.	T.S.	P.S.	Pr.S.	T.S.
Chamber	7.7	30.5	13.9	0.0	23.7	5.9	90.0	45.8	79.1	2.2	0.0	1.7
	96.3	34.6	81.1	0.0	15.4	3.8	3.8	50.0	24.5	0.0	0.0	0
	34.0	31.9	33.3	1.9	34.3	9.8	63.7	34.9	56.5	0.5	0.0	0.3
	164	49	213	4	42	46	302	64	366	5	0.0	5
	34.5	31.6	33.8	0.8	27.1	7.3	63.6	41.3	58.1	1.1	0.0	0.7
Senate	10.3	40.0	17.9	0.0	33.3	8.5	83.9	23.3	68.4	5.7	3.3	5.1
	97.5	0.0	70.1	0.0	40.0	0.9	2.5	60.0	18.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
	45.7	36.8	43.4	2.9	31.6	10.3	51.4	31.6	46.2	0.0	0.0	0.0
	96	26	122	3	28	31	128	28	156	5		6
	41.4	31.3	38.7	1.2	33.7	9.8	55.2	33.7	49.5	2.2	1.2	1.9

* P.S. = plurality seats; Pr.S. = proportional seats; T.S. = total seats

** North = North Italy excluding Emilia Romagna; Centre = Emilia Romagna-Toscana-Umbria-Marche; South = remaining regions and islands

(1) Polo della Libertà (PL), Polo del Buon Governo (PBG) and their variants (including MSI-AN alone, Lista Pannella in the Chamber and Lista Pannella-Riformatori in the Senate)

Table 5: List votes % in the 1987, 1992 and 1994 legislative elections (Chamber of Deputies)

	1987	1992	1994
Democrazia Proletaria	1.7	-	-
Rifondazione Comunista	-	5.6	6.0
PCI/PDS	26.6	16.1	20.4
Rete	-	1.9	1.9
Lista Verde/ Fed. Verdi/Verdi	2.5	2.8	2.7
Ad	-	-	1.2
Psi	14.3	13.6	2.2
Dc/Ppi	34.3	29.7	11.1
Patto Segni	-	-	4.7
Pri	3.7	4.4	-
Psdi	3.0	2.7	-
Pli	2.1	2.9	-
Partito Radicale/Lista Pannella	2.6	1.2	3.5
Lega Lombarda/Lega Nord	0.5	8.6	8.4
Forza Italia	-	-	21.0
Msi-Dn/Msi-An	5.9	5.4	13.5
Other minor lists	2.8	5.1	3.4

Table 6: Mean % of votes of district winners

	North % and Nr.	Centre % and Nr.	South % and Nr.	All % and Nr.
Chamber	50.00 (180)	48.38 (80)	41.32 (215)	45.80 (475)
Senate	39.55 (87)	45.20 (40)	35.65 (105)	38.76 (232)
All	46.60 (267)	47.31 (120)	39.47 (340)	43.49 (707)

* In parentheses the number of seats

Table 7: Number of candidates elected by % of votes and by area

Area		% of votes of district winners				
		>50%	<=50 e >35 %	<=35 %	(Tot.)	(Tot. %)
Chamber	North	90	86	4	180	37,9
	Centre	33	44	3	80	16,8
	South	31	132	52	215	45,3
	(Tot.)	154	262	59	475	100,0
	(Tot. %)	32,5	55,2	12,4	100,0	
Senate	North	3	65	19	87	37,5
	Centre	12	23	5	40	17,2
	South	1	54	50	105	45,3
	(Tot.)	16	142	74	232	100,0
	(Tot. %)	6,9	61,2	31,9	100,0	

Table 8: Mean % of votes of district winners by electoral cartel

electoral cartel	Chamber		Senate	
	nr. of seats won	mean % of votes	nr. of seats won	mean % of votes
Progressisti	164	43.4	97	39.4
Patto per l'Italia	4	30.5	3	35.5
Polo della libertà	164	50.0	74	39.2
Polo buon governo	129	44.5	54	36.2
Forza Italia + others	1	25.2		
MSI-Alleanza Nazionale	8	27.8		
Others	5	65.0	4	52.8
All	475	45.8	232	38.8

Table 9: Districts distribution according to the distance between the winner and the second placed candidate

votes margin between first and second candidate	Cham- ber + Senate	Chamber				Senate				
		North	Centre	South	Italy	North	Centre	South	Italy	
marginal districts	0 - 8 %	228	22 (15.9 %)	7 (5.1 %)	109 79.(%)	138 (100%)	18 (20%)	1 (1.1%)	71(78.9%)	90 (100%)
			(12.2%)	(8.8%)	(50.7%)	(29.1%)	(20.7%)	(2.5%)	(67.6%)	(38.8%)
safe districts	8 - 32 %	393	109	55	101	265	65	29	34	128
fortress districts	>32 %	86	49	18	5	72	4	10	.	14
Totals		707	180	80	215	475	87	40	105	232

Table 10: Frequency distribution of districts by number of candidates and by area (Chamber and Senate)

Nr. Cand.	Cham. +Sen.		Chamber				Senate				
			North		Centre		South		Italy		
2	5		1		4	5					
3	56		2	10	35	47			5	4	9
4	233		106	43	59	208		3	6	16	25
5	192		59	23	67	149		13		30	43
6	112		12	3	35	50		3	24	35	62
7	44			1	8	9		13	5	17	35
8	16				5	5		8		3	11
9	46				2	2		44			44
10	3					0		3			3
Total	707		180	80	215	475		87	40	105	232

Fig. 1: Mean % of Votes of the Winner by
Number of Candidates in the District

(Chamber and Senate)

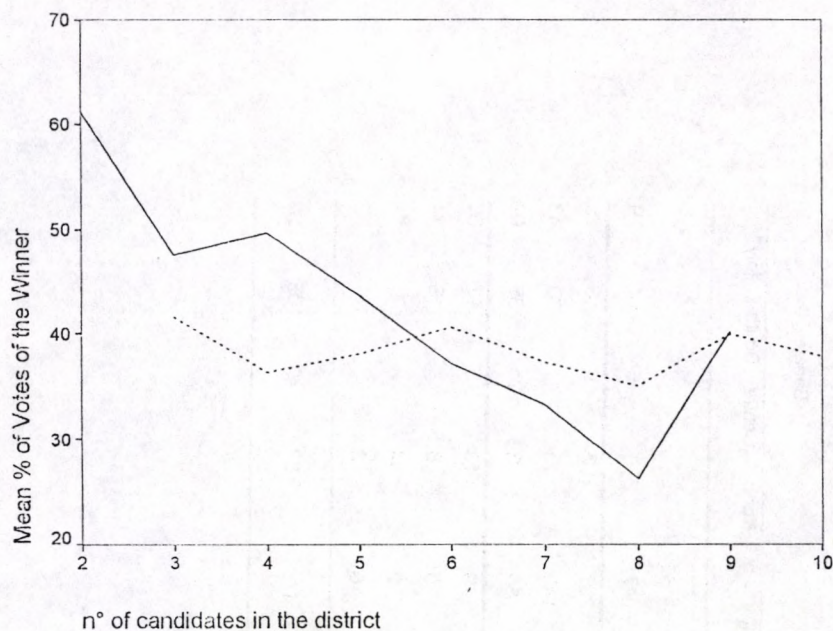


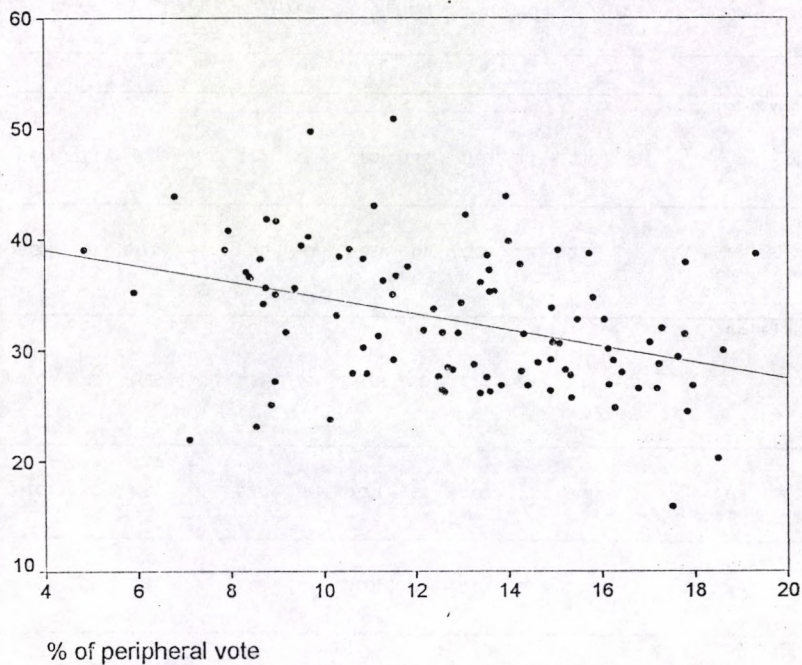
Table 11: Mean marginal, residual and dispersed vote by area (as % of total valid votes)

	North			Centre			South			Italy		
	marginal	residual	dispersed	marginal	residual	dispersed	marginal	residual	dispersed	marginal	residual	dispersed
	%			%			%			%		
Chamber	24,4	1,8	0,3	26,6	1,6	0,1	27,4	3,9	1,1	26,1	2,7	0,6
Senate	37,3	15,1	9,5	34,9	10,6	8,0	36,1	14,4	12,7	36,4	14,0	10,7
Cham. + Sen.	28,6	6,2	3,3	29,3	4,6	2,7	30,3	7,3	4,9	29,5	6,4	3,9

Table 12: Mean dispersed vote by vote margin between the winner and the second placed candidate

vote margin	Chamber		Senate	
	mean %	nr. cases	mean %	nr. cases
0 - 4 %	1,48	64	12,75	46
4 - 8 %	1,16	74	11,88	44
8 - 12 %	0,43	59	10,55	30
12 - 16 %	0,63	57	11,58	25
16 - 20 %	0,30	30	9,86	23
20 - 24 %	0,26	41	8,58	25
24 - 28 %	0,31	47	9,03	16
28 - 32 %	0,05	31	7,91	9
32 - 36 %	0,38	23	6,41	6
36 - 40 %	0,03	19	8,65	4
40 - 44 %	1,72	16	7,20	2
44 - 48 %	2,96	9		0
>48 %	0,92	5	10,65	2

Fig. 2: Percentage of Votes to the PBG Candidates and level of the peripheral vote (Senate)



$Rsq = 0.1431$

Table 13: Plurality winners by main cartel and by the pattern of competition in the district

Nr.	base pattern: competing candidates	variants	Chamber Winners						Senate Winners					
			left (1)		right (2)		total (3)		left (1)		right (2)		total (3)	
			Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%
Norther and Central Italy Pattern														
1	FI/LN + AN + Patto + Prog.		66	31,0	147	69,0	213	100,0	43	42,2	59	57,8	102	100,0
2		FI/LN + Patto + Prog + Others	1	10,0	9	90,0	10	100,0	0	0,0	15	100,0	15	100,0
Southern United Right Pattern														
3	FI/AN + Patto + Prog. + Others		29	31,2	62	66,7	93	97,9	27	46,6	31	53,4	58	100,0
4		FI/AN + Patto + Prog. + LP	5	19,2	21	80,8	26	100,0	8	27,6	21	72,4	29	100,0
5		FI/AN + Patto + Prog.	21	35,0	39	65,0	60	100,0	8	66,7	2	16,7	12	100,0
Southern Divided Right Pattern														
6	FI + AN + Patto + Prog.		31	75,6	8	19,5	41	95,1	5	100,0	0	0,0	5	100,0

(1) Left = Progressisti

(2) Right = Polo della Libertà, Polo del Buon Governo and their variants

(3) When the total % does not add to 100 it mean that at least a seat has been won by other candidates than those of the Progressisti and of the Poli

Table 14: Mean vote to the candidates and to the lists linked to them in districts, electoral cartels and their internal party components

electoral cartels & parties	nr. of candidates	mean % of votes to the candidates	A	mean % of votes to the lists	B	difference between candidates and lists votes (A - B)	electoral victories	rate of success of candidates
Progressisti	468	30.6	31.9	-1.3	164	33.0		
Rc	58	31.1	33.9	-2.8	27	46.6		
Pds	182	32.2	33.7	-1.5	72	39.6		
Ind. Sin.	48	25.2	25.5	-0.3	10	20.4		
Psi	38	30.1	31.6	-1.5	14	36.8		
Verdi	31	32.2	32.8	-0.6	11	35.5		
Ad	49	31.4	32.6	-1.2	18	36.7		
Rele	39	27.6	27.6	0.0	6	15.4		
Crist. Soc.	20	29.3	30.5	-1.2	5	25.0		
Rin. Soc.	2	30.9	30.6	0.3	1	50.0		
Polo Libertà	235	40.1	36.7	+3.4	164	69.8		
Ln	61	41.1	34.1	+3.4	107	72.3		
Fi	148	37.8	37.7	+3.7	38	62.3		
Ccd	15	34.1	32.0	+2.1	8	53.3		
Udc	3	49.6	41.8	+7.8	3	100.0		
Riformatori	6	47.8	43.0	+4.8	6	100.0		
Pld	2	49.7	43.1	+6.6	2	100.0		
Polo Buon Go.	187	37.2	35.2	+2.0	129	69.0		
Fi	63	35.9	35.6	+0.3	36	57.1		
An	102	37.8	34.5	+3.3	79	77.5		
Ccd	21	36.8	37.7	+1.1	13	61.9		
Udc	1	30.4	33.9	-3.5	1	100.0		

Appendix

Table A: General results of the Chamber of Deputies by electoral cartels and parties: votes, single-member, proportional and total seats

electoral cartels and parties	list votes		proportional seats		single-member seats		total seats	
	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%
PDS	7.855.610	20,4	37	23,9	72	15,2	109	17,3
RC	2.334.029	6,0	12	7,7	27	5,7	39	6,2
Verdi	1.042.496	2,7	0	0,0	11	2,3	11	1,7
PSI	841.739	2,2	0	0,0	14	2,9	14	2,2
Rete	718.403	1,9	0	0,0	6	1,3	6	1,0
AD	452.396	1,2	0	0,0	18	3,8	18	2,9
CS					5	1,1	5	0,8
RS					1	0,2	1	0,2
Ind. Sin.					10	2,1	10	1,6
Tot. Progressisti	13.244.673	34,3	49	31,6	164	34,5	213	33,8
PPI	4.268.940	11,1	29	18,7	4	0,8	33	5,2
Patto Segni	1.795.270	4,7	13	8,4	0	0,0	13	2,1
Tot. Patto per l'Italia	6.064.210	15,7	42	27,1	4	0,8	46	7,3
Forza Italia	8.119.287	21,0						
Forza Italia			25	16,1	74	15,6	99	15,7
CCD (1)			7	4,5	22	4,6	29	4,6
UDC					4	0,8	4	0,6
PLD					2	0,4	2	0,3
Riformatori					6	1,3	6	1,0
AN	5.202.698	13,5	22	14,2	87	18,3	109	17,3
Lega Nord	3.237.026	8,4	10	6,5	107	22,5	117	18,6
LP	1.355.739	3,5	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Tot. Poli	17.914.750	46,4	64	41,3	302 (2)	63,6	366	58,1
SVP	231.826	0,6	0	0,0	3	0,6	3	0,5
Lista Valle d'Aosta					1	0,2	1	0,2
Lega d'Azione Meridionale	59.853	0,2	0	0,0	1	0,2	1	0,2
Socialdemocrazia	179.367	0,5	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Lega Alpina Lumbarda	135.954	0,4	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Verdi-Verdi	32.815	0,1	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Altre Leghe	134.471	0,3	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Liste autonomiste	33.425	0,1	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Other Lists	565.779	1,5	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Tot. Others	1.373.490	3,6	0	0,0	5	1,1	5	0,8
Total	38.594.477	100,0	155	100,0	475	100,0	630	100,0

(1) The votes for the CCD, presenting itself with its own list only in the Molise, have been included in the 'Other Lists'; the 7 proportional seats gained are therefore been attributed to CCD candidates present in the Forza Italia lists.

(2) These seats have been won as follows: 164 by the PL (of which: Lega Nord 107, Forza Italia 38, CCD 8, Riformatori 6, UDC 2); 129 by the PBG (of which: AN 79, Forza Italia 36, CCD 13, UDC 1); 1 by Forza Italia-CCD (Mastella) and 8 by AN alone.

Source: our own elaboration of the data of the Ministero dell'Interno and of the organisational headquarters of the parties (for what concerns party affiliation of the elected). Party affiliations are considered at the moment of the election; changes occurred at later stages are not considered.

Table B: General results of the Senate by electoral cartels and parties

electoral cartels and parties	votes		proportional seats		single-member seats		total seats	
	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%	Nr.	%
DS			14	16,9	46	19,8	60	19,0
DC			4	4,8	14	6,0	18	5,7
Verdi			0	0,0	7	3,0	7	2,2
SI			1	1,2	11	4,7	12	3,8
Letta			4	4,8	2	0,9	6	1,9
LD			3	3,6	7	3,0	10	3,2
IS			0	0,0	4	1,7	4	1,3
IS			0	0,0	1	0,4	1	0,3
Ind. Sin.			0	0,0	4	1,7	4	1,3
tot. Progressisti	10.883.507	32,9	26	31,3	96	41,4	122	38,7
PI			27	32,5	3	1,3	30	9,5
Patto Segni			1	1,2	0	0,0	1	0,3
tot. Patto per l'Italia	5.518.615	16,7	28	33,7	3	1,3	31	9,8
Polo della Libertà	6.570.544	19,9						
Polo del Buon Governo	4.544.671	13,7						
Forza Italia	150.326 (1)	0,5	7	8,4	25	10,8	32	10,2
DCD			2	2,4	10	4,3	12	3,8
IDC			0	0,0	3	1,3	3	1,0
Riformatori			0	0,0	1 (2)	0,4	1	0,3
LN	2.079.593 (3)	6,3	13	15,7	34	14,7	47	14,9
Lega Nord			5	6,0	55	23,7	60	19,0
Pannella-Riformatori	767.400	2,3	1	1,2	0	0,0	1	0,3
tot. Poli	14.112.534	42,7	28 (4)	33,7	128 (5)	55,1	156	49,5
Lega Alpina Lombarda	246.476	0,7	1	1,2	0	0,0	1	0,3
VP	217.250	0,7	0	0,0	3	1,3	3	1,0
Lista Magris	61.398	0,2	0	0,0	1	0,4	1	0,3
Lista Valle d'Aosta	27.493	0,1	0	0,0	1	0,4	1	0,3
Part. Pensionati	250.543	0,8	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
SAz.	88.351	0,3	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Verdi-Verdi	68.068	0,2	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Socialdemocrazia	66.467	0,2	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Altre Leghe	341.220	1,0	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Liste autonomiste	175.684	0,5	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
Other Lists	1.020.796	3,1	0	0,0	0	0,0	0	0,0
tot. Altri	2.563.746	7,8	1	1,2	5	2,2	6	1,9
total	33.078.402	100,0	83	100,0	232	100,0	315	100,0

1) The votes obtained in the region Abruzzo by the alliance Forza Italia-CCD, whose candidates competed against those of Alleanza Nazionale

2) Mr. Stanzani, candidate for the Polo della Libertà in Veneto

3) These are the votes obtained by AN with candidates outside the Polo del Buon Governo Cartel (in the regions of Piemonte, Lombardia, Trentino Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Emilia Romagna, Toscana, Marche, Umbria e Abruzzo)

4) These seats have been won as follows: 8 by the Polo della Libertà (of which: Lega Nord 5 and Forza Italia 3), 10 by the Polo del Buon Governo (of which: AN 5, Forza Italia 3, CCD 2), 8 by AN alone, 1 by Forza Italia-CCD and 1 by the Lista Pannella-Riformatori Scoppelliti)

5) Among which 74 won by the Polo della Libertà and 54 by the Polo del Buon Governo

Source: our own elaboration of the data of the Ministero dell'Interno and of the organisational headquarters of the parties (for what concerns party affiliation of the elected). Party affiliations are considered at the moment of the election; changes occurred at later stages are not considered.

Party Labels

Party name	Party label	English translation
Alleanza Democratica	AD	Democratic Alliance
Alleanza Nazionale	AN	National Alliance
Altre Leghe	Altre Leghe	Other Leagues
Centro Cristiano Democratico	CCD	Christian Democratic Centre
Cristiano-Sociali	CS	Social Christians
Democrazia Cristiana	DC	Christian Democracy
Democrazia Proletaria	DP	Proletarian Democracy
Indipendenti di Sinistra	IS or Ind. Sin.	Left Independents
Lega Alpina Lombarda	L A L	Alpin-Lombard league
Lega d'Azione Meridionale	L d A M	League of Southern Action
Lega Lombarda	LL	Lombard League
Lega Nord	LN	Norther League
Liste Autonomistiche	Liste Autonomistiche	Autonomist Lists
Liste Magris	Liste Magris	Magris' List
Liste Pannella	LP	Pannella's List
Liste Valle D'Aosta	L V D A	Aosta Valley List
Movimento per la democrazia-La Rete	Rete	Mouevnt for Democracy - The Net
Movimento Sociale Italiano - Alleanza Nazionale	MSI - AN	Italian Social Movement - National Alliance
Movimento Sociale Italiano - Destra Nazionale	MSI - DN	Italian Social Movement - National Right
Pannella-Riformatori	Pannella-Riformatori	Pannella - Reformers
Partito Comunista Italiano	PCI	Italian Communist Party
Partito Democratico della Sinistra	PDS	Democratic Party of the Left
Part. Pensionati	PP	Party of the Pensioners
Partito Popolare Italiano	PPI	Italian Peoples Party
Partito Repubblicano Italiano	PRI	Italian Republican Party
Partito Sardo d'Azione	PS d'Az.	Sardinian Party of Action
Partito Socialista	PS	Socialist Party
Partito Socialista Italiano	PSI	Italian Socialist Party
Partito Social Democratico Italiano	PSDI	Italian Social-Democratic Party
Partito Liberale Italiano	PLI	Italian Liberal Party
Partito Radicale	PR	Radical Party
Patto Segni	Platto Segni	Segni's Pact
Polo Liberal-Democratico	PLD	Liberal - Democratic Pole
Rifondazione Comunista	RC	Communist Refoundation
Riformatori	Riformatori	Reformers
Rinascita Socialista	RS	Socialist Renewal
Socialdemocrazia	Socialdemocrazia	Socialdemocracy
Sudtiroler Volkspartei	SVP	South - Tyrol Peoples Party
Unione di Centro	UDC	Union of the Centre
Verdi	Verdi	Greens
Verdi Verdi	Verdi Verdi	Greens
Verdi Verdi	Verdi Verdi	Greens

Notes

* We would like to thank Alessandro Chiaramonte, Aldo Di Virgilio and Massimiliano Miglio for their co-operation in several phases of this research.

¹ Note that this party has changed again its name in January 1995. The old MSI label has been dropped and the party now calls itself Alleanza Nazionale

² Running several simulation Chiaramonte has demonstrated that the *scorporo* produced this result. Without *scorporo*, or with a partial *scorporo* like in the Chamber, the right-wing cartel (the Poli) would have achieved the absolute majority of the seats even in the Senate.

³ However, this result is the algebraic sum of the over-representation of the PDS and of RC and of the under-representation of the other lists of the left. Four left-wing party-lists (Rete, Verdi, PS, AD) have failed to overcome the 4% threshold in the Chamber, wasting altogether about 8% of the PR votes. This fact has determined a loss of proportional seats for the Progressisti in the Chamber and, therefore, it accounts for their different performance in the two branches. For an evaluation of the specific weight of the left wasted vote on the distribution of proportional seats see Chiaramonte (1995). The conclusion is, however, that the effect was limited and non decisive because some of the seats lost by the small left-wing parties went anyway to the PDS and to RC.

⁴ In the choice of these areas we have made reference to the old political traditions of the red-belt regions. From the North we have excluded Emilia-Romagna. The Centre is the traditional area of strong local rooting of the left (Emilia-Romagna, Toscana, Marche, Umbria). The South includes all other regions. Within these three area important differences exist. In the North, in some zones of Piemonte and of Liguria the left fares far better than in the rest of the area. In the Centre, in some districts of Emilia Romagna and of Marche the electoral competition is relatively balanced. In the South, Sicily stands out from the other regions for its strong support to the right. On the whole, however, the differences among the areas have in these elections a relevance far greater than the differences within each area due to the amplifying effect of the plurality formula. For an analysis of these elections in terms of geo-political maps see Natale (1994) and Diamanti (1994).

⁵ In this analysis we have not considered a factor often suggested as an explanation of the differences between the Chamber and the Senate: the vote of the young electors. Due to the different age qualifications for voting in the two chambers (18 and 25 years respectively) the electoral body of the lower chamber is considerably larger. The difference, which in these elections amounted to roughly 5 millions of valid votes, is likely to be made up by young voters between 18 and 25. The hypothesis that this factor be responsible of the worse performance of the left in the Chamber has been advanced in the aftermath of the elections, making reference to both vote differences and survey results. However, survey results are somehow contradictory, and the validity of conclusion drawn on the basis of vote differences between the two branches is questionable. With this latter method one can reach conclusions contrary to those fore mentioned. For instance, one could underline that the Progressisti candidates obtain a global percentage of votes which is actually identical in the Chamber and in the Senate (32.8 versus 32.9). Moreover, the left lists obtain in the Chamber 34.3% of the votes, that is more than the left candidates in the Senate. Our opinion is that this factor has played a role that can not be easily detected and which was anyway rather modest.

⁶ If one looks at the plurality victories not only in terms of mean level but also in terms of the distribution of such level, the different performance of the Poli in the two branches is more evident. Only one senator of the Polo delle Libertà is elected with an absolute majority of votes, whereas 85 deputies overcome the absolute majority threshold. The same is true for the Polo del Buon Governo: one senator against 28 deputies. For the Progressisti the difference is lower: 37 deputies elected with absolute majority as against 12 senators. As far as the victories obtained with less than 35% of the votes are concerned, the situation is reversed between Progressisti and the Poli: in the Chamber the Progressisti win the greatest part of their seats with less than 35% of the vote: 31 out of 59 as against 16 out of 59 for the Poli.

⁷ As a matter of fact the level of the threshold is influenced also by other factors. See D'Alimonte and Chiaramonte (1993). On how the threshold has actually functioned in these elections see Chiaramonte (1995).

⁸ A different explanation is offered by Agosta (1994, pp. 24-25), who argues that the lower fragmentation of the candidacies in the Chamber was due to the availability of the list vote (the proportional one). His hypothesis is that the opportunity offered to minor parties to present lists in the proportional component, without being obliged to present also district candidates, has favoured the reduction of the number of candidacies in the Chamber. This hypothesis, however, neglects the existence of a 4% national threshold for the Chamber, which was a strong negative incentive precisely for minor and local parties and candidates.

⁹ The peripheral vote is always very high in the Senate compared to the Chamber: even in the North is about 9.5%, but here the lead of the PL candidates is such that it does not make a difference on the final outcome of the elections in the districts.

¹⁰ A significant difference exists only for the Chamber Southern districts. However, this is probably due to the division of the right in several Southern districts, which produces a lower concentration of the vote over the first two placed candidates.

¹¹ In the Senate the residual vote is high, but is always high and for all kind of candidates. One could imagine that this vote is predominantly moderate and right-wing oriented and that it has weakened the candidates of the Poli lowering the winning threshold to the advantage of the Progressisti. However, no sufficient evidence is as yet available on this point.

¹² This is confirmed by the study of the mean vote for candidates of the different cartels in the three geographical areas. The Progressisti obtain on average 23% of the votes in the North (no major difference between Chamber and Senate), and about 30% in the South. These figures suggest the structural weakness of the left in the North which prevent it from profiting from the weakening of their adversaries of the Polo della Libertà due to the dispersed vote. In the South, on the contrary, with 30% of the vote and with a higher dispersed vote, the left manages to win a certain number of marginal districts.

¹³ In the pattern n. 4 the candidates are three because either a fourth candidate was absent, or, although being present, it did not match the criteria of relevance for its inclusion into the pattern. These criteria are those described above for the definition of the peripheral vote.

¹⁴ It is reasonable to believe that the existence of a 4% national threshold for proportional representation into the Chamber has brought about strategic defections. There were voters which did not want to waste their vote for a list they deemed incapable of overcoming such threshold. Our opinion, however, is that in these elections this phenomenon was marginal. After the first learning experience, it is likely that in the future voters will be more aware of this constrain in their electoral choice.

¹⁵ For what concerns the assumptions underlying the analysis of the individual vote mobility which is hidden behind aggregate swings, our position is summed up in the pages of Chapter 2 in Bartolini and Mair (1990).

¹⁶ In the case of the Indipendenti di Sinistra this has probably been a deliberate choice. On the contrary, in the case of the Rete, wrong expectations about the vote for this party in Sicily have played an important role. This vote turned out to be far lower than in the recent past and lower than expected. On the Sicilian vote see Ricolfi (1994).



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